

Barrington's Substance Abuse Task Force

Drug Free Community Coalition

Barrington Middle School

Middle Highway Barrington, RI 02806

Monday, September 10th, 2012 at 8:45 am.

Minutes

Present: Marta Iachetta (School), Stacie McLoughlin (Parent), Deb Perugini (Staff), Joanne Royley (School), Kathy Sullivan (Staff), Susan Freel (Parent), Deb Jerome (Civic group), Martha Donovan (Parent), Lara Courturier (parent), Sara Kriz (Media)

Not present:

Stephen Phelan (Business), Ariel Alves (youth), Denise Alves (State Organization with Expertise in field of substance abuse), Olivia August (youth), Elizabeth Barnum (Religious Organization), Harper Berriman (youth), Diane Block (health care), Laina Caesar(youth), Bill Cameron(business), Grethe Cobb (healthcare), Dan Converse(parent), Jill Cuzzone (Parent), Bill Dewitt (Business), John Dire (Youth), Heidi Fanion (Parent), Claudia Gordon (Parent), Eric Hill(School), Maureen Janetta (School), Eileen Johnson (Healthcare), Valerie Noey (Parent), Jason Piette (Youth Serving Organization), Alex Portugal (Youth), Bob Shea (School), Michael Squatrito (Youth Serving Organization), Achina Stein(Healthcare), Cindy Thompsen(Civic group), Erica Zins (Youth), Wendy Zucker (parent), Liana Caesar (youth), Tyler Dubuc

(youth), Nancy Guertin (Organization involved in Reducing Substance Use), Mimi Karlin (Youth), Chief John LaCross (Police), Elsie Wright (School), Dr. Kristen Westmoreland (Staff)

Welcome and Introductions

Conference Updates

Stacie McLoughlin, Deb Perugini, Kathy Sullivan and Deb Jerome shared highlights from the summer's Community Anti-Drug Coalition's of America (CADCA) conference. Some of the many issues learned were the consequences of marijuana use (its impact upon employability), the impact of "pill mills" in other states, Prescription Monitoring Programs, Alcohol advertising impact on youth, and many more concerns for our coalition. We agreed to tap into the knowledge as we develop programs throughout the year.

Legislative Update

Decriminalization bill – this bill passed into law. It goes into effect in April 2013. The MJ committee will work on messaging for parents/faculty and community leaders to help them understand the law. (see below overview)

Committee Reports

Parenting – update on the Parenting 101 letter and demonstration of EP's newsletter format. Promotion of Family Dinner and securing

PTO reps for the year. Acknowledgement of the sad loss of Kari Banas.

Marijuana Comittee – discussion of the CADCA conference with updates from Deb Jerome, Stacie McLaughlin and Deb Perugini. KS invited BAY Team members to the upcoming RISAS conference at which Marta Iachetta is presenting on Social Norms. DP to send out a date for the next meeting of the group. More members of this group are needed. We discussed the challenges of educating students – ex the advisory session that actually resulted in fewer students with a perception of harm of driving while intoxicated.

Policy Committee – KS updated the group on Policy Brief that Kristen, Claudia Gordon, the Chief, and Diane Block have been working hard on over the summer. A broad discussion on the age of sellers of alcohol was had. There was concern that youth aged 18 can sell alcohol and how challenging it might be for an 18 yr old to ask for ID from someone older. KS acknowledged the challenge and stated that the BAY Team did ask the Town of Barrington to include age 21 for sellers of alcohol in the Class A license holders, but the town solicitor thought this might lead to employee discrimination.

BAY Youth/CHOICES/St. Andrews – We had the 1st BAYouth meeting. Students will be working on seatbelt awareness, Teamspirit follow up, and identified tobacco smoking as a problem they would

like to tackle.

CHOICES – new members needed. They will meet Thursday afterschool. Students always welcome to meet in Marta's room during lunch. Red Ribbon Week Jingle planned!

Prescription Drug Committee – DJ updated the group on the Drug Take Back event and the new Permanent Drop Box to be housed in the lobby of the Police Station. Heidi Fanion, several youth, Achina Stein, Deb Jerome and Eileen Johnson will volunteer at the upcoming event. KS will hang the banner and promote the event in the local media.

School PTO Reps – thanks to Lara for joining as the Sowams Rep. We need to clarify the BHS rep.

Health Teacher Training – KS updated the group on the recent training which focused on Class Action and Project Northland.

Fall Sports Meeting – Sara Kriz helped design the fall sports calendar with a prevention message. This was distributed to all parents. Also, there was a new Parent Contract distributed at these meetings.

Upcoming BAY Team events:

September 24th - Family Dinner Day – KS to promote and put up banner.

September 29th – Drug Take Back at the Police Station. 10-2.

September 29th – BEF Ducky Race – Volunteers still needed.

Member(s) of the Month(s)!

Stacie McLaughlin and Deb Jerome!

RI's New Law to Reduce Penalties for Marijuana Possession

On June 13, 2012, Gov. Lincoln Chafee signed S 2253/H 7092 into law, making Rhode Island the 15th state to remove the possibility of jail for first offense possession of a small amount of marijuana. We are concerned about the impact of this change on the perception of harm of the use of marijuana. When youth perception of a drug's harm decreases, youth use rates of that substance increase.

Currently in Rhode Island, possession of up to an ounce of marijuana is penalized with a criminal misdemeanor charge that carries a sentence of up to a year in jail and/or up to a \$500 fine.

Beginning on April 1, 2013, S 2253/H 7092 will change Rhode Island law as follows.

How S 2253/H 7092 Changes the Penalty for Possession of Marijuana

- Individuals over the age of 18: Possession of up to an ounce of marijuana for individuals 18 and older will be penalized with a \$150 civil offense and forfeiture of the marijuana for the first and second offenses within 18 months.**
- Individuals under the age of 18: Possession of up to an ounce of marijuana by individuals under 18 will subject these minors to the same civil violation as adults for a first or second offense within 18 months. The minor offender will also be required to attend a drug education course as well as perform community service.**
- Failure to provide identification or to honestly give name: Law enforcement may arrest an individual found in possession of up to an ounce of marijuana if he or she fails to produce picture identification when requested or he or she fails to honestly provide his or her name.**
- Failure to pay fines: The civil fine will double to \$300 if not paid within 30 days of issuance and double again to \$600 if it has not been paid within 90 days.**

- **Civil violations for marijuana possession will not be grounds for revocation of parole or probation.**

Subsequent offenses: For all individuals found in possession of up to an ounce of marijuana, a third offense within 18 months could result in a misdemeanor conviction punishable by up to 30 days in jail and/or a fine of up to \$500.